



## Montana Nurses Association

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EXHIBIT 5 HVA  
DATE 2-6-09  
HB 325

February 6, 2009

RE: HB 325 Colon Cancer Screening

Chairperson Becker and fellow committee members,

Montana Nurses Association (MNA) is the "Voice of Nurses in Montana" representing Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses throughout the state.

I appreciate the opportunity to come before you today in support of HB 325. HB 325 seeks to insure colon cancer screening as a covered provision in health coverage policies issued in the State of Montana.

Colon Cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. This cancer type takes more than 50,000 lives annually in the United States and is said to take more than 150 Montana lives annually.

The 5 year survival rate under late detection drops drastically from the statistics shown for early detection. In fact, early detection shows a 90% survival rate which drops to 10% following the migration of the cancer to other organs when detected late.

The American Cancer Society recommends regular colon cancer screening for everyone 50 years of age and older.

MNA believes that a lack of health insurance coverage for these life saving screenings is a known barrier to early detection. MNA advocates for improved patient outcomes and increased access to appropriate and cost effective health care. We believe this legislation will save lives and so we commend Rep. Sands for bringing this legislation forward and we ask for your "do pass" vote on HB 325.

Robert Allen  
Executive Director  
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